CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
OCTOBER152022

Scripture Story: Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:11-17; Revelation 12:7-9.
Commentary: *The Great Controversy* (or *Love Under Fire*), chapters 29, 30.

the SINdrome



Photo by Terrill Thomas

flashlight

"Even when it was decided that he could no longer remain in heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. . . . The inhabitants of heaven and of other worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice and mercy of God in the destruction of Satan. Had he been immediately blotted from existence, they would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. Evil must be permitted to come to maturity" (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 498, 499).

keytext

"And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon. . . . So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

(Revelation 12:7-9, NKJV)

what do you think?

Choose one of the points to defend and explain your choice.

Which do you think is easier to illustrate, support, or explain:

Acts of extreme evil committed by ordinary people are compelling evidence of a supernatural conflict between Christ and Satan.

Or

Acts of extreme goodness by ordinary people are compelling evidence of a supernatural conflict between Christ and Satan.

Which do you think more vividly responds to the question people have about the goodness of God and the origin of evil?

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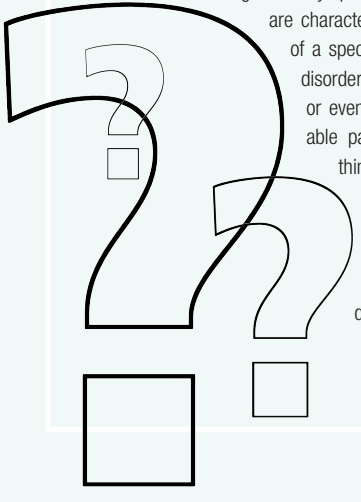
did you know?

Syndrome." It's not really a word, but it combines the words syndrome and sin; notice how they describe the birth and life of evil.

The word "sin" actually means "to miss the mark." It is a target-shooting word that conveys the idea of aiming wrong.

The dictionary defines a syndrome as "a group of signs and symptoms that together are characteristic or indicative of a specific disease or other disorder" and "a group of things or events that form a recognizable pattern, especially of something undesirable."

If you put the two words together, we have a condition in which we aim wrong, miss the mark, and the result is a disease that continues to destroy.



INTO THE STORY

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'"

"Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, "Thus says the Lord God: 'You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created. You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you.'"'"

"And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

(Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:11-17; Revelation 12:7-9, NKJV)



OUT OF THE STORY

As you read the portions of Scripture that depict the birth of evil, what do you think is the most important verse in the story? Why?

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What key words and phrases are used to describe Lucifer's nature before he fell?

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What does the Bible say that caused Lucifer to become corrupt?

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In this story of Lucifer's fall, how would you explain God's apparent inactivity?

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Why didn't God cut the work of sin short? (Read *The Great Controversy*, chapter 29.)

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In what way does this story deepen your view of God's love and expand your hatred of sin?

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Who in the Bible or in history seemed to fall the same way Lucifer fell?

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punch lines

"Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" **(Romans 5:18, 19, NIV).**

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" **(Genesis 3:15, NIV).**

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world" **(1 Peter 5:8, 9, NKJV).**

"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" **(Hebrews 2:14, 15, NKJV).**

"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" **(John 10:9, 10, NIV).**

further insight

"In the final execution of the judgment it will be seen that no cause for sin exists."

—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy,* p. 503

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read Genesis 3:14, 15.

Read and respond to the either/or activity in the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. What do you think more effectively exposes the reality of good and evil? It is clear that there are two sides. In your reading today, God draws a line in the sand and pits two sides against one another. Adam and Eve, and all the children of God, stand opposed to Satan in the conflict between good and evil. Enmity. Hostility. Opposition. What does God promise about how this conflict will end?

Sunday

Read 1 Peter 5:8, 9.

As you read the *Into the Story* section and answer the questions in *Out of the Story*, notice that the three passages form a composite story of the origin of evil. Even though there is little information in Scripture about how sin began, there is ample evidence of the effects of sin on people and the world. How does reading the story of Lucifer's fall affect the way you see God's character revealed in the Scripture? How does knowing how it all began help you understand how to make choices today? If God is speaking to you in these snapshots of sin's birth story, what message do you think He is trying to convey to you?

Monday

Read Revelation 12:7-9.

The *Key Text* from this week's lesson and today's reading where we see a battle that begins in heaven—a rebellion that ensues in the very presence of God's throne and ends up here on earth. Which phrase speaks to you?

- "and war broke out in heaven"
- "Michael and his angels fought with the dragon"
- "the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail"
- "nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer"
- "the great dragon was cast out"
- "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world"

As you think of believers who have a keen awareness of how sin began and where it is headed, whom do you know who lives with the attitude that God has won and Satan has lost? How does it show up in their life?

Tuesday

Read John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9.

Read the *Flashlight* quote for this week's lesson and consider the questions this passage from *The Great Controversy* answers for people today. God's plan to answer the presence of evil had to result with sin being "fully destroyed" and "utterly eradicated." How does God's decision to deal with sin differ from the way the human mind works? How does God's approach to the sin problem stand in contrast to the way Satan accomplishes his goals? As you look more fully at the truth of how sin began and where it is going, God's way of love is by far the most supernatural thing anyone will ever see. Think of all the things in life today that are considered "supernatural." What does that mean? How might you connect the way God solves the problem of sin to the world you live in today?

Wednesday

As you read the passages listed in the *Punch Lines* section of this week's lesson, which verse speaks to you today about where you stand in reference to the war that rages between Christ and Satan? How might these verses speak to some of the questions people have about the character of God in a world that seems to be full of evil?

Thursday

Read Romans 16:20.

In today's reading Paul says, "And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen" (NKJV). How does this work? In what way does how we live "crush" Satan? How do our acts of love, kindness, mercy, and justice serve to strike devastating blows to the kingdom of evil? Do such demonstrations of God's loving ways dispel the perceptions and lies Satan has told about God? As you serve God this week, think about how Satan's deadliest tool is to get people to think something wrong about God. The devil's primary tool is deception. What are some things you can do to tell the truth about God's character to others?

Friday

Read John 10:9, 10.

Think about how your perceptions of God have changed over the years? What did you know about Him as a little child? How has your understanding of who God is and His plan for your life transformed over time? How is our understanding of God's character important in making it impossible for sin to return after Christ puts a final end to it?

this week's reading*

The Great Controversy (or *Love Under Fire*), chapters 29, 30.

**Love Under Fire* is a special adaptation of *The Great Controversy,* created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.